

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 278380
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TO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SHUM, EAID, US, GV

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON GUINEA, SOVIET FLIGHTS,
PL-480, PATROL BOATS, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, HUMAN RIGHTS

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SUCCESSIVE AMERICAN AMBASSADORS WORKED HARD TO PERSUADE
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ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAY THE MISSION, HEADED BY PR?M?

MINISTER LOUIS LANSANA BEAVOGUI, MADE NO FORMAL REQUESTS DURING ITS WASHINGTON TALKS BUT MENTIONED THAT GUINEA WOULD LIKE TO ACQUIRE SOME PATROL BOATS TO POLICE ITS FISHING ZONE AS WELL AS SOME TRANSPORT PLANES.

EVEN THESE TENTATIVE APPROACHES PROVOKED DEBATE AND CREATED A PROBLEM, A FAIRLY COMMON ONE FOR AN ADMINISTRATION THAT HAS GIVEN HEAVY EMPHASIS TO HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY. - - -

SHOULD WASHINGTON OFFER MODEST MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IN THE HOPES OF PERSUADING MR. TOURE BOTH TO LOOSEN FURTHER HIS TIES TO THE SOVIET UNION AND TO RELAX HIS DICTATORSHIP? OR HAS HE DISQUALIFIED HIMSELF BECAUSE HIS REGIME IS REPRESSIVE?

THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT THE SEVERITY OF THAT REPRESSION, DESPITE THE CLAIMS OF THE GUINEAN MISSION THAT PRESIDENT CARTER AND TOURE HAVE MUCH IN COMMON IN THEIR DEDICATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS.

IN THE SAME MONTH OF JUNE THAT MR. BEAVOGUI'S MISSION VISITED WASHINGTON, THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS SENT A THICK VOLUME TO THE UNITED NATIONS, DOCUMENTING WHAT IT CALLED A CONSISTENT PATTERN OF VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA.
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WITH "PROFOUND REGRET," FOUR FORMER AMERICAN AMBASSADORS TO GUINEA SIGNED A COVERING LETTER TO SECRETARY GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM, SAYING THE EVIDENCE SUPPORTED CHARGES OF "SYSTEMATIC DETENTION WITHOUT DUE PROCESS OF ANYONE PRESUMED TO BE IN OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT; THE TORTURE, EXECUTION, MURDER AND STARVATION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS; THE FORCING INTO EXILE OF MORE THAN TWO MILLION GUINEANS, AND OTHER GROSS VIOLATIONS."

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IN LIGHT OF MR. TOURE'S REPRESSION, STATE DEPARTMENT HUMAN

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MODEST INCREASE IS RESISTED:

ONE GROUP IN THE ADMINISTRATION HAD PUSHED FOR A FOOD PROGRAM OF DOLS 7.2 MILLION FOR GUINEA IN FISCAL 1978, BUT DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE WARREN M. CHRISTOPHER RECENTLY APPROVED A DOLS 5.5 MILLION PROGRAM, ABOUT THE AVERAGE MAINTAINED BY THE UNITED STATES IN GUINEA OVER MANY YEARS.

HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICIALS POINTED OUT THAT NEW LEGISLATIVE RE-UNCLASSIFIED

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STRICTIONS REQUIRE THE ADMINISTRATION TO ASSURE CONGRESS THAT FOOD AID TO GOVERNMENTS VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS GOES TO THE POOREST PEOPLE AND IS DISTRIBUTED FREE OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. THEY SAID THEY WOULD BE HESITANT TO SO TESTIFY IN GUINEA'S CASE.

OFFICIALS SAID THE HUMAN RIGHTS SPECIALISTS HAD LEFT NO DOUBT THAT THEY WOULD STRENUOUSLY OPPOSE ANY MOVE TO PROVIDE GUINEA WITH FINANCING FOR PATROL BOATS, PARTLY BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE THIS VENTURE INTO MILITARY AID WOULD PROVOKE A STORM IN CONGRESS.

MORE TRADITIONAL THINKERS IN BOTH STATE AND DEFENSE ARGUE THAT IF THE UNITED STATES REBUFFS MR. TOURE'S OVERTURE, IT WILL ONLY INVITE GREATER REPRESSION AND LEAVE GUINEA EVEN MORE DEPENDENT ON THE SOVIET UNION. THEY SAY NEITHER DEVELOPMENT WOULD SERVE ANY AMERICAN INTEREST IN AFRICA OR ELSEWHERE.

"WE'VE BEEN GUILTY OF WISHFUL THINKING ABOUT GUINEA IN THE PAST, BUT THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT IS AT LEAST WORTH PROBING," SAID ONE OFFICIAL. "THEY JUST MIGHT BE A LITTLE MORE FORTHCOMING, EVEN IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA. IT DOES SEEM THAT THEY ARE TRYING TO LOOSEN UP A LITTLE."

THE OFFICIAL SAID HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED THAT MR. TOURE RESPONDED WITH A FAR LIGHTER HAND THAN USUAL TO ONE OF THE RARE PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST HIS REGIME IN AUGUST-- A PROTEST LED BY WOMEN AGAINST THE SCARCITY OF FOOD IN THE MARKETS.

"THERE WERE SOME ARRESTS, BUT NO HANGINGS, NO EXECUTIONS," HE SAID. THE OFFICIAL SAID MR. TOURE'S RELATIVE MODERATION UNCLASSIFIED

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FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. END QUOTE. CHRISTOPHER

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 278380 SENT ACTION CONAKRY NOV 21.
QUOTE UNCLAS STATE 278380

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
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Executive Order: N/A
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From: STATE
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Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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